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Sent: 1/28/2022 1:50:13 AM
To: Steinbachs, John [steinbachsj@ottawapolice.ca]
Subject: Chief's notes

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Speaking points for Chief Sloly for briefing January 28, 2022

I wanted to provide you with a brief update today before I hand it over to Acting Deputy Chief Trish Ferguson, who is leading the OPS response to the upcoming Freedom Rally.

The Ottawa Police Service is the incident command for this demonstration. We are coordinating with our police partners to ensure that this event provides an opportunity for those attending to express their point of view, but also ensures the safety of area businesses and residents, too.

One of the great things about Canada, and more specifically Ottawa as the seat of the nation, is our legal right to peacefully demonstrate. As police, it is our duty to ensure the safety of all those who attend hundreds of such demonstrations here every year.

The event this weekend is expected to be significant. All open source information, along with our interactions with Freedom Rally organizers, indicate that there will be a large number of participants and that this will be an extremely fluid event that could go on for a prolonged period of time.

Residents and visitors can expect to see a large police and emergency services presence in the downtown core and on major highways and roads. Traffic delays and congestion will occur and may impact driving on a large scale city-wide.

For those of you living in the downtown core, we are doing everything we can to ensure that things like lanes for emergency vehicles are kept open. We understand your concerns and have been reaching out to area businesses to provide information and support.

But our expectation is that it will be a very difficult weekend for everyone who lives in Ottawa. You will need to plan accordingly and will likely have to put things off, like errands or grocery shopping, for another day.

Over the past week, we have been meeting with our partners to develop a fulsome plan that will ensure that: we have the most current intelligence from all federal and police partner sources, the proper cadre of officers and relief officers to respond to any emergent needs, as well as a plan to address things like traffic disruption, parking problems, or more serious issues like damage to property, or criminal and violent behaviour.

We are seeing a lot of rhetoric online and it's both unhelpful and in some cases, irresponsible. We are monitoring all intelligence and coordinating with those federal and local partners to ensure that we are identifying those who would pose a threat.

We have evidentiary teams prepositioned that will be videotaping all aspects of the demonstration. And we will be gathering evidence should there be any acts of violence or breaches of the criminal code, of any kind, within the city of Ottawa.

We have prepositioned intelligence assets, and we have prepositioned investigators, who will be working throughout the entire event and in the days and weeks following, should there be any violence in the city and acts of criminality associated to the demonstration.

We have consulted with the Crown Attorney's Office and we are fully prepared, both legally and operationally, to address any risks associated with the demonstration, while continuing to facilitate people's rightful ability to come to the Nation's Capital and express themselves on matters associated to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

We have also developed a plan that will facilitate the orderly and peaceful departure from Ottawa at the end of the demonstration. We ask that everyone who attends is respectful of each other, our officers and our police partners, as well as to area businesses.

My job as Chief of Police is to keep people safe – to keep the community safe. I want to see everyone get home to their families and loved ones.

And I will do everything I can to ensure a peaceful demonstration and an equally peaceful departure.